

From: ron
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Ron Hardesty
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January 28, 2002

Attorney General John Ashcroft
US Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Mr. Ashcroft:

I am in favor of Microsoft and the Department of Justice settling the antitrust case. It is time for the federal government, the plaintiff states, and Microsoft to get back to the things that really matter.

There is a multitude of reasons why this case should be settled. To begin with, Microsoft has been unfairly singled out in this case. Several other high-tech, media conglomerations truly are monopolistic. Yet, Microsoft has been the only target of antitrust litigation. Additionally, the suit was brought under the guise that consumers were being harmed by anticompetitive behavior on Microsoft's part. To the contrary, Microsoft helped consumers by producing innovative products at reasonable prices. The lawsuit has driven up prices of Microsoft software. Consumers will clearly benefit from an end to this protracted litigation.

The terms of the settlement agreement are more than fair. Microsoft has agreed not to retaliate against those who promote or distribute software that competes with Windows. They also agreed to begin designing Windows in such a way so that it is easier for computer manufacturers, consumers, and software developers to promote non-Microsoft software within Windows. It will be much easier for consumers to change the configuration of their computers. This will result in more choices, and, hopefully, stronger competition.

I hope to see this settlement agreement finalized as soon as possible. Thank you for reviewing my comments.

Sincerely,

Ron Hardesty

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